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## Factors That Drive the Choice of Schools for Children in Middle-Class Muslim Families in Indonesia: A Qualitative Study

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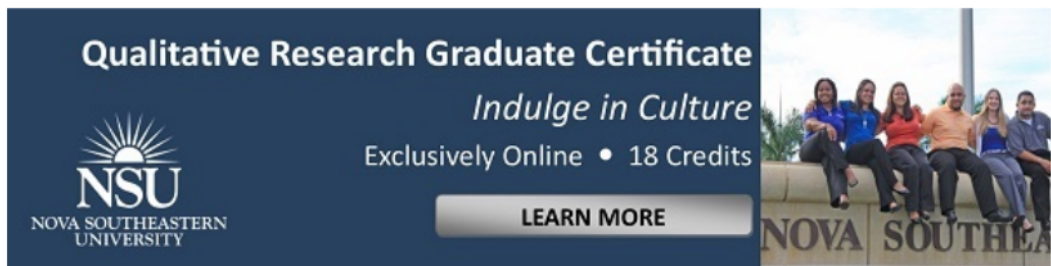
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## **1** Factors That Drive the Choice of Schools for Children in Middle-Class Muslim Families in Indonesia: A Qualitative Study

### **1** Abstract

Every different community has different family educational goals. The educational goals can encourage forming a lifestyle that becomes the identity of a particular community, as is the case in the middle-class Muslim family community in Indonesia. While there is no caste system in Indonesia, middle-class Muslim communities have found ways to merge Islamic values and privilege into a new subgroup. This phenomenon mainly appears in urban areas with more advanced socio-economic development than other areas, such as Yogyakarta. This study explores factors that drive the choice of schools for children of middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia. We used qualitative research methods in the data collection and data analysis process. Participants in this study are seven parents from several modern Islamic-based elementary schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The results show, factors that drive the choice of schools for children of the middle-class family in Indonesia are connectivity between the goals of education in schools and the goals of family education is to build good children's morals based on Islamic values and to provide a balanced provision of both religious and non-religious knowledge for the future welfare of their children.

### Keywords

middle-class Muslims, family, education goals, Indonesia, qualitative

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## Factors That Drive the Choice of Schools for Children in Middle-Class Muslim Families in Indonesia: A Qualitative Study

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Every different community has different family educational goals. The educational goals can encourage forming a lifestyle that becomes the identity of a particular community, as is the case in the middle-class Muslim family community in Indonesia. While there is no caste system in Indonesia, middle-class Muslim communities have found ways to merge Islamic values and privilege into a new subgroup. This phenomenon mainly appears in urban areas with more advanced socio-economic development than other areas, such as Yogyakarta. This study explores factors that drive the choice of schools for children of middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia. We used qualitative research methods in the data collection and data analysis process. Participants in this study are seven parents from several modern Islamic-based elementary schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The results show, factors that drive the choice of schools for children of the middle-class family in Indonesia are connectivity between the goals of education in schools and the goals of family education is to build good children's morals based on Islamic values and to provide a balanced provision of both religious and non-religious knowledge for the future welfare of their children.

*Keywords:* middle-class Muslims, family, education goals, Indonesia, qualitative

### Introduction

Indonesia is a multicultural country (Burhani, 2018; Churiyah & Sakdiyyah, 2020). There are thousands of ethnic groups and many religions embraced by hundreds of millions of Indonesian people (Hidayat, 2015). The Census of the year 2000 registered more than 1000 ethnic and sub-ethnic groups, each group claiming to have its language and culture (Lan, 2011). The depiction of multicultural life in Indonesia is captured in the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) (Abdulkarim et al., 2020). *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* reflects the balance between the elements of difference that characterize the diversity and the aspects of similarity that characterize unity. Balance itself is a philosophical concept that always lies in the tension between two extreme points; namely, absolute diversity on the one hand and absolute unity on the other. The diversity aspect that accentuates the differences will lead to conflict; it is a unity that will defuse based on national consciousness (Ridwan & Fauzi, 2021). By implementing the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Indonesian people can build a multiculturalism society consisting of a myriad of cultures and ethnicities but still live in harmony and peace.

In a multicultural society, the majority of the population of Indonesia adheres to Islam and conducts social activities as guided by Islamic values (Supriyatno et al., 2021). Even though Muslims in Indonesia are the majority, they still live side by side with people of other religions because Islam is a religious teaching that upholds multiculturalism (Hasyim, 2016). There are hardly any visible differences in daily interactions between people who adhere to Islam and others. They get along and understand each other in many aspects of life, such as in association and work. However, one thing that is the easiest way to recognize Muslim identity (Ali & Afdillah, 2020) in Indonesia is wearing the hijab, as most Muslim women do. (Fauzi, 2012). Nevertheless, Indonesian Muslims live peacefully with residents of different religions. Islam has succeeded in understanding the existing local cultural setting and internalizing it in that cultural setting so that the community can accept its existence (Al-Amri & Haramain, 2017).

The life of Muslim communities in Indonesia continues to experience growth in both the number and model of its movements (Noor, 2015; Rusyana, 2014). During the development of modernization and industrialization in Indonesia, Islamic religiosity is not threatened; instead, modernization and industrialization strengthen its adherents' religious orientation. This phenomenon is marked by various Islamic movements in Indonesia (Hasbullah, 2000). The existence of trade reforms in the 1920s carried out by indigenous Indonesian-speaking Muslims gave birth to a new group of Indonesian Muslims; namely, the middle-class Muslim (Rahman & Hazis, 2018). These phenomena triggered the emergence of new phenomena related to Muslim social life in Indonesian cities. Middle-class Muslims want to be recognized as a modern society by using religiosity rather than other modern symbols. However, symmetrical modernity with liberalism, hedonism, and the influence of westernization provides room for negotiation for middle-class Muslims to improvise in their unique lifestyle. The middle-class Muslims adhere to Islamic values as a *syar'i* way of life [*syar'i* is something that is done based on sharia provisions, while sharia is a rule or stipulation that Allah commands to His servants].

The emergence of a middle-class Muslim in urban Indonesia (Hasanuddin et al., 2017), has become a wave of social change that is happening at the moment. Although the issue of Muslims is always stereotyped with religious and racial labels also synonymous with modest appearances (Aziz, 2012), that condition does not become an obstacle for Indonesian urban middle-class Muslims to continue to exist in their modern and more glamorous lifestyle. The new middle-class Muslim group has a unique lifestyle, such as going for Hajj or Umrah with special packages and fashionable expensive Muslim clothing, commonly known as religious commodification (Ropi, 2016). The expression of religious identity by the middle-class Indonesian Muslims is closely related to their modern paradigm of thinking as the effects of globalization (Mujibuddin & Zuliana, 2019). The middle-class Muslim has a relatively strong economic capacity and good purchasing power (Hasanuddin & Purwandi, 2017). Middle-class Muslims are navigating the neo-liberal social world in which they live (Rakhmani, 2019).

The codes of behavior, ideology, and identity of middle-class Muslims in Indonesia can generally represent the culture that emerges in their lives. Some forms of artistic representation are (1) the phenomenon of headscarves; (2) the emergence of modern religious songs; (3) the formation of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association (in the Indonesian language known as *ICMI: Ikatan Cendekia Muslim Indonesia*); (4) the publication of various modern Islamic media in which the middle-class Muslims articulate intellectual ideas; and (5) the mushrooming of elite study groups, which are generally attended by professionals, business people, government officials, artists and those who are called middle-class Muslim (Hasbullah, 2000). This cultural representation also affects the orientation of their beliefs and life patterns, including how they prepare for the next generation of their family. Middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia have a unique way of educating their children: Indonesian middle-class Muslim families send their children to elite Islamic schools (Amalia, 2018; Rifai, 2006),

whereas educational facilities, educational services, and educational patterns differ from state schools run by the government or traditional private schools (Hidayah, 2021).

### **Research Settings**

The research was conducted in Yogyakarta, one of the big cities in Indonesia (Hasanah et al., 2019; Olivia et al., 2020). The original local culture of the people of Yogyakarta is Javanese culture (Kusumo et al., 2020), which has various local beliefs rooted in animism, dynamism, and Hindu-Buddhist beliefs. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, religious life in Yogyakarta was no longer dominated by Hinduism, Buddhism, and animism dynamism but was more complex and multireligious, including Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam. The culture of the Yogyakarta society that has been formed with Islamic tradition is inseparable from the history of the entry of Islam into Java; It Begins with the history of the Mataram kingdom. Islam entered the land of Java through socio-culture (Khoirul Hodayah, 2012).

Along with the growth of the middle-class Islamic community in Yogyakarta, modern Islamic schools are also growing and are in demand by the middle-class Islamic community (Machali, 2018). Modern Islamic schools develop a balanced curriculum of religious and general knowledge (Nugraha & Syarifudin, 2021; Subroto et al., 2021). Modern Islamic schools are in great demand by the middle class Muslim community in Yogyakarta, including Muhammadiyah schools (Arifin, 2013; Hefner, 2016; Retnasari & Suharno, 2018), Modern Islamic school Al-Azhar (Kresnadi & Pranata, 2020; Liswiana et al., 2018), Integrated Islamic School (Kurniawan et al., 2021; Nurhudaya et al., 2020; Wahyuningsih & Khuriah, 2016), Global Islamic School (Munir & Muassomah, 2021; Syafrida et al., 2020; Wijayanti et al., 2018), and several modern Islamic Boarding Schools (Demartoto, 2020; Hidayah, 2021).

Islamic boarding school is known as *pesantren* in Indonesia. Generally, there are two types of pesantren in Indonesia: *salaf* (traditional) and *khalaf* (modern). Salaf Islamic boarding schools are pesantren that tend to carry out the educational process by holding traditional values. Salaf (traditional) pesantren are usually managed by people who focus on religious education. The main characteristic of teaching in salaf pesantren is the emphasis on the literal study of particular books and literature, followed by reading other sources. In addition, the salaf pesantren is a traditional Islamic educational institution that prioritizes the development of the character of respect and devotion of the *santri* (*santri* is a term for students in pesantren) towards *Ustadz* (teacher) and *Kiai* (*Kiai* is the designation for the Elders or highest leaders in salaf pesantren) (Marzuki et al., 2020). Most pesantren provide housing or dormitory living at low or no cost for the students. Usually, middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia prefer modern Islamic Boarding Schools (Assa'idi, 2021; Hidayah, 2021; Pribadi, 2021).

### **Research Question**

This study investigates the research question: what factors do Indonesian middle-class Muslim parents consider when choosing a school for their children?

### **Researcher Role**

We are a group of researchers from three different universities in Indonesia. The multicultural life in Indonesia is a unique phenomenon and attracts our attention because it can be a good example of how to live in a peaceful society in a multicultural country.



## Method

We consider that the most appropriate method for this study is a qualitative method (Shudak, 2018) because we collect research data with the belief that the people who have experienced the phenomenon in this study are the ones who know the truth of the phenomenon being studied. We determined the participants in this study by using purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020). Criteria for participants in this study are as follows: Muslim parents who send more than one of their children to a modern Islamic-based elementary school; live in Yogyakarta; come from a middle-class Muslim family in Indonesia. Muslim middle-class in this context are Muslim entrepreneurs and professionals such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, lecturers, accountants, and others (Syaifudin, 2021). The number of participants is limited to seven. The number of participants is relatively small because each participant can provide a lot of data (Langdrige, 2017).

The data collection procedure we carried out through several stages: (1) the beginning of the process of retrieving data (we have obtained a research permit); (2) After getting permission we distributed broadcasts to WhatsApp (WA) groups of parents or guardians of students in modern Islamic-based elementary schools in Yogyakarta about the application for voluntary participation in our research; (3) Parents of students who volunteer to become participants, contact us through the WA contact number we have distributed on our broadcasts; (4) After five days of transmission through WA, we managed to get seven prospective participants who were willing to become participants in our study voluntarily; (5) we collect data through individual interviews using interview guides that only contain the main questions. Further research questions we developed spontaneously when the interview was conducted. Each participant was interviewed for between 30-60 minutes.

The participants who participated in this study were seven parents. In terms of age and gender, participants who took part in this study had the following characteristics:

**Table 1**

*Characteristics of participants*

Gender of	Women	4
	Men	3
Age	<30 years	2
	31-35	5
Total		7

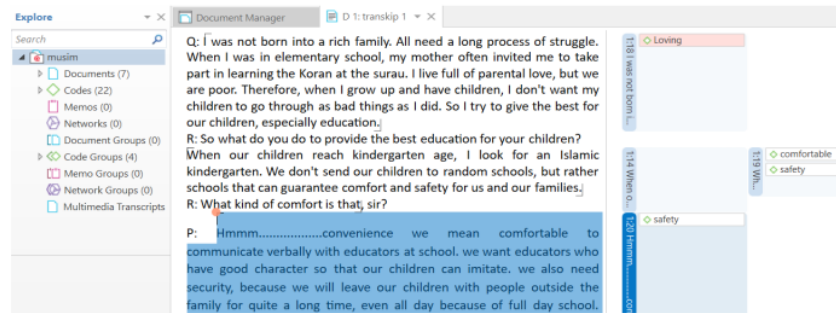
## Data Analysis Process

We conducted data analysis using thematic analysis methods (Meier et al., 2008; Williamson et al., 2018) with the assistance of the application Atlas.ti.9 (Paulus et al., 2019). All data analysis processes were carried out as follows (1) The first step we took was to transcribe the interview data, and then (2) we put all transcripts document into *Atlas.ti* (3) After all transcripts are inputted into *Atlas.ti*, the next step is coding and data reduction; (4) the next step is to collect codes that have the same meaning into themes (codes group). (5) After forming the theme, the next step is forming a conceptual network to find the flow of the problem and get information on the core of the research results to be used as material for discussion. In more detail, the steps of data analysis are as follows:

1) Coding and data reduction

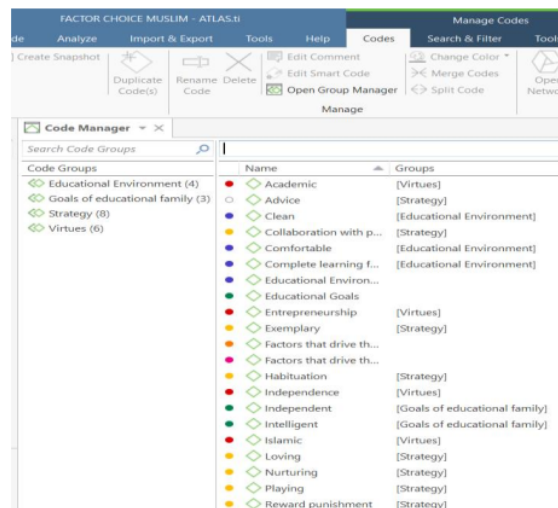
The coding process was carried out carefully, reading every word in the transcript to capture the meaning and finding words that could represent the contents of the statement relevant to the research background. Coding is identifying the meaning of each participant’s relevant statements. We use the research background and research questions as a reference for coding and selecting data that can be used to answer research questions or not (Elliott, 2018). We always try to assume that each participant’s statement has the same value during coding, so we objectively assign meaning to each relevant information. The process carried out, for example, is as follows:

**Figure 1**  
Coding process



2) After all the transcripts were coded, we managed to find 22 codes that imply the factors that drive the choice of children’s schools for middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia. The next step is to group the codes into four themes: strategy, goals, values, and educational environment.

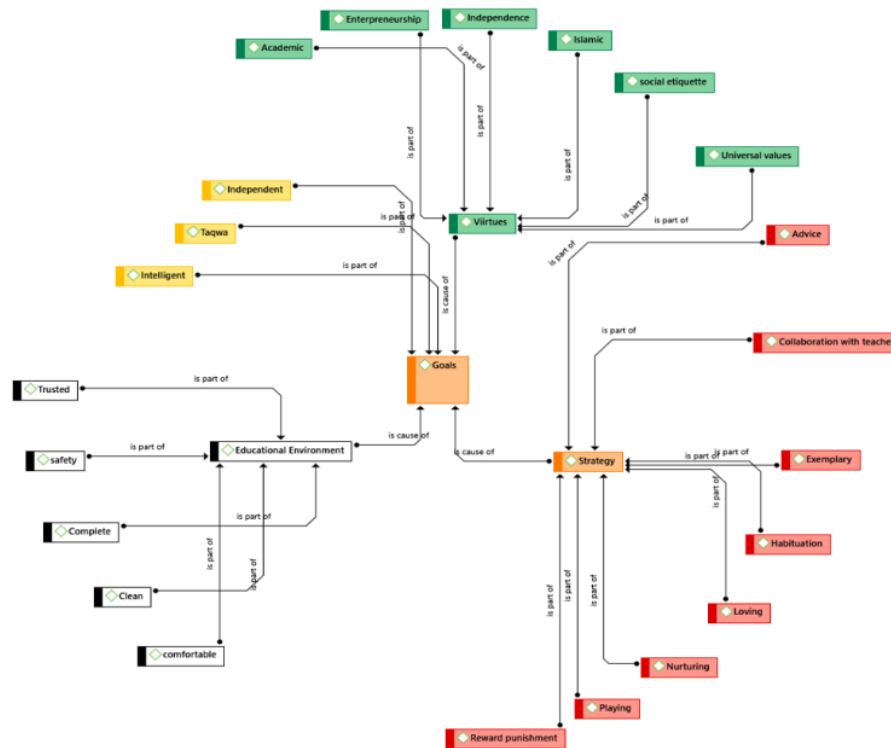
**Figure 2**  
Theme formation process





3) The next step is to create a network to analyze the connection between themes. The results of the analysis between themes are shown in the following figure:

**Figure 3**  
Conceptual work of factors that drive the choice of schools for children



4) The next step is to find the meaning of all the themes. This meaning is the essence of the results of this study.

5) The next step is data presentation

6) The last step is the discussion and conclusion

## Results

The results of the data analysis presented in figure 3 show that four main factors drive middle-class Muslim parents in Indonesia to choose schools for their children. These factors are the goals of family education, values developed in schools, educational strategies carried out in schools, and the academic environment. Each theme is briefly described and illustrated with exemplar quotes from the participants.

### Goals: Family and School Educational Goals Must be Inline

The participants shared that one of the primary considerations in choosing a school for their children was the focus on realizing educational goals in their family. In choosing a school

for children, middle-class Muslim parents seek information about schools' educational goals. They believe that the purposes of instruction in schools must be in line with the goals of education in their families. One of the relevant statements regarding this is the statement of P1 as follows:

Choosing a school is the same as choosing a partner in education. It should not be arbitrary. We must believe that the school where the children study must have a goal that is in line with the educational purposes in our family, namely so that our children grow up to be good people and intelligent. To determine whether it is in line, we will study the school's vision and mission shown on its website (P1, lines 9-11).

Another participant (P2) also stated the same thing about the ability of schools to help realize the goals of family education as a top priority in choosing schools for their children. The desire to have children who are pious and good at general knowledge becomes a benchmark in choosing a school for their children. *Taqwa* is a term for Muslims that means emotional awareness of God's presence. A *taqwa* person will always try to do everything well, following Allah's commands and staying away from His prohibitions (Maham & Bhatti, 2019). The significant emphases are on believing in the Oneness of Allah/Tawheed and Doing Good Deeds (Sidek, 2018). Parents usually mention good children as children devoted to Allah, with the word *sholeh/sholehah* children. One of the relevant P2 statements is as follows:

Yes, there are many things that we think about when we choose a school for our children, especially at the elementary school level. For us, primary school education can be a starting point for children's development in the future, so we have to choose a school that can help us build the religious foundation for our children to grow up to become devout Muslims. We also want schools to [improve] the intelligence of our children so that in the future, they can live independently (P2, lines 7-12).

P4's statement also confirms what is in line with P1 and P2 they expect their children to grow up to be Muslims who are devoted to Allah and intellectually developed. The following is P4's statement regarding this matter:

We hope that our children will grow up to be people who have faith in Allah according to the teachings of Islam. They also have to learn to be independent [and] get used to help[ing] themselves. We consider it very important to be taught from a young age, at home, and at school, wherein children grow up mentally, spiritually, and intellectually healthy. We realize that children must be equipped with the cultivation of good morals and must also be equipped with various skills so that in the future, they will be able to live appropriately without having to rely on their parents (P4, lines 12-14).

Other participants also had the same experience as other participants, that the compatibility between education goals in their families and the goals of education at school was essential. P5 also gave a similar statement to the other participants as follows:

As Muslims, we hope that our children will be pious children who have strong beliefs about Islam as the religion of truth. We also expect them to grow up to become intellectually capable people; to develop themselves, so they don't depend on others in the future. We need partners in educating children, so we

need to find an exemplary school and our family's expectations of children (P5, lines 15-19).

In another part, P5 also stated that they looked for as much information as possible related to potential schools for their children to study. The statement is as follows:

We seek as much information as possible before we decide to send our children to this school. In our opinion, this school is very suitable for fostering moral development and good character. Teachers treat children with love. That was the first thing that caught our attention (P5, lines 22-25).

Another relevant statement was also explicitly stated by P7 as follows:

When I search for schools for children, I think about many things, especially about the possibilities that my child can experience in school. We are looking for schools that can help educate us in inculcating moral values according to the teachings of the Islamic religion that we believe in. We also want a school that can build children's intellectuality to live well according to their times without depending on others (P7, lines 12-16).

From these relevant statements, middle-class Indonesian Muslim Parents focus on expectations and goals within their family in finding schools for their children. Based on the analysis results, parents generally want their children to be good and intelligent people to meet the future. When they grow up, the next generation of Muslim middle-class families can grow strong in terms of religion and have independence of economy.

### **Values instilled in school**

The participants said that the values instilled in schools are one of the factors that encourage parents to choose schools for their children. Based on the relevant statements, the participants assessed that several values are important and become the main things to be instilled in children: Islamic moral values, independence, entrepreneurship, and social ethics. Participant 1, for example, said that he was interested in sending his children to Modern Islamic Elementary School because the quality was good, both in terms of academics and the development of Islamic values for children. Here is the relevant statement:

When I was looking at my children's school, I always paid attention to the values and culture developed in that school. Especially for our children who are still in elementary school, we need help to shape the children's character based on solid Islamic values, so I chose an Islamic school, not a public school for them (P1, lines 14-18).

Another participant mentioned that Islamic moral values taught in modern Islamic schools are one of the main attractions for sending their children to school. Following are the relevant statements from P2:

Yes, since the beginning of the year, we have been looking for school information that is suitable for our child. As Muslims, we want our children to be good Muslims. Our family education goals are becoming realized when they study in a place that provides ample scope for moral and moral growth. We

[chose] this school because it has proven that the community knows children graduating from this school have good behavior. Until now, we have never heard of any student or alumni of this school involved in deviant behavior (P2, lines 19-25).

Other participants' statements are also in line with P2 that the values instilled in the schools they choose for their children are the values they believe to be good and needed for children in the future. These values include social values and religious values. The following are the relevant statements of P5 participants regarding this matter:

I have a neighbor whose child goes to the elementary school where my son is now studying. I saw that the child was very polite and had an excellent social attitude towards people in our housing complex. I noticed that the child was also very diligent in praying in the mosque. My neighbor said it was because of his upbringing in his family and school that he was taught that way, so we were also interested in sending our children to that elementary school (P5, lines 35-41).

In addition to religious values, other factors for Indonesian middle school Muslim parents in choosing schools are the entrepreneurial values developed in schools. Following are the relevant statements regarding this matter:

My [eldest] child used to study at this school. I also sent my [second eldest] to the same elementary school because, according to our observations, this school is very good at developing religious and entrepreneurial values. Since the first grade of elementary school, children have been taught to recognize various business locations in multiple regions, and then children are taught to trade. The trade tradition has been introduced in school since my son was the first to study there. The school has a habit of opening a school market once a month, where students can act as traders. These values are beneficial for children's real-life when they live in a society.

We also find in a similar statement in P7 about the main thing that is interesting for them to want to send their children to modern Islamic schools:

We think all parents of students in this school are not [very] different from us. We send our children to a modern Islamic-based elementary school because we want our children to grow up with good Islamic morals, respectful fellow students, and independence as the values developed in Islam. We see that the school where our children study supports making children more moral. In addition to material content always associated with Islamic moral values, the teacher also provides a concrete example of good behavior (P7, lines 18-23).

### **Teaching Strategy in Schools**

The teacher's teaching strategy is one of the factors that parents consider when choosing a school for their children. Parents also look closely to see how the school is educating its students. The participants said that the way teachers teach with love, habituation, example, guidance, through games, reward, and punishment, as well as the efforts made by schools to collaborate with parents during the children's education process, is a way of educating that

attracts their attention. Below is a statement from P2 regarding the importance of knowing the educational strategies carried out by teachers in schools:

When I first came to the school where my child studied, I noticed firsthand how the teachers treated the children at school. For me, it is essential because the way children [are educated] can affect the psychology of children in the future. We want our children to learn with feelings of joy and love so that they also know how to treat others well. Well, I see at that school the teachers teach in fun ways according to the age of elementary school children, while playful and loving. The teacher's behavior is also excellent, so the children can imitate him (P2, lines 31-36).

The teacher's teaching strategy through good habits in learning is also one factor that encourages P6 when choosing a school for his child. Here is their statement regarding this:

Before sending our children there, we often saw the teachers teaching habitually. The children were accustomed to praying and reading the Koran every morning. We often see children [walk] around the school, and learn to greet the neighbors around the school, which is a good thing and attracts us to send our children there (P6, 56-61).

The participants also highlighted the pattern of communication with parents. Parents find it very helpful when teachers regularly communicate and involve them in the education process of their children at school. The collaboration of teachers and parents is an essential factor for parents in choosing a school for their children. The participants mentioned that it is easier for children to develop themselves without experiencing confusion with communication and cooperation between teachers and parents. In summary, studies show that when choosing a school, parents of students from middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia look for an education system that meets the educational needs of children in building a solid character in terms of religion and develops children's cognition and skills and considers the child's physical and mental development.

### **Good Educational Environment**

The educational environment in schools is one of the things considered by middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia. The academic environment consists of three components; namely, the physical environment and the emotional and intellectual climate. Educational climate refers to the various physical sets, contexts, and values students receive in education (Bakhshialiabad et al., 2019). The parents stated that the condition of the learning environment at school was a factor that was highlighted by parents when they wanted to find a school for their children. Things that are in the spotlight regarding the condition of the educational environment in schools include a safe, comfortable, clean environment and complete learning facilities. A good learning environment is important because parents need to be sure that they are comfortable and secure when they leave their children for a day at school. The following is P2's statement regarding this matter:

My husband and I work together, so there is no time to look after my elementary school-aged children. With the existence of a modern Islamic-based school, with the concept of a full day, we feel there is a place for our children to study

while we work. We trust the teachers more in our children's school (P2, lines 30-35).

Completeness of educational facilities, such as clean classrooms, digital facilities, and facilities for worship practices, are also factors considered by the participants because parents feel confident that complete facilities and comfortable school environments can help children learn more effectively. In this context, the participants focused on talking about good educational services. No one complained about the relatively high cost of education compared to other educational institutions.

## Discussion

Based on the study results, we identified that middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia are trying to find schools that can realize the ideal image of children as the next generation in their families. Children who have Islamic behavior and have life skills (intelligent and independent) become figures expected to be realized through the education process at home and in the right schools. The method of teaching Islamic morals in schools (Nuriman & Fauzan, 2017), becomes a benchmark for middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia in assessing whether a school is appropriate for them to choose. On the other hand, middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia who are used to a self-sufficient lifestyle from an economic perspective also want their children to have life skills (Turiman et al., 2019) through the development of science and technology (Grewal et al., 2020), without mentioning any objections regarding the price they have to pay.

### **Building Children's Morals Based on Islamic Values**

In choosing a school, middle-class Muslim parents in Indonesia highlight various factors in schools, such as teaching strategies, values developed, and an Islamic educational environment that can provide security and comfort for children. All of this is intended so that schools' educational process can help parents build children's morals based on Islamic values (Santoso & Khisbiyah, 2021), as the values believed in their family. The Islamic morals that parents try to instill in children in middle-class Indonesian Muslim families are not just to build social behavior and personality; this effort is also a way for parents to invite their children to prepare to become economic actors based on the Islamic moral economy (Rusydziana & As-Salafiyah, 2021). Indonesian middle-class Muslim families are very concerned about the values of independence and entrepreneurship (Woronkowitz, 2021) as moral values that support excellent and brilliant Muslim characters. Parents consciously try to find the best school for their children to affect children's development positively (Hasanah et al., 2019).

### **Building Children's Life Skills to Prepare Children's Futures**

The lifestyle of a middle-class Muslim family in Indonesia (Weng, 2018) presents a blend of Islamic values with glamorous modern life, and has opened their eyes to the importance of having Islamic morals and life skills so that their children can live economically viable lives in the future. The ideal person profile of children described in middle-class Muslim families in Indonesia is said to have the characteristics of taqwa (Sidek, 2018), smart (McMahon, 2001), and independent (Sharmin et al., 2021), which is a strenuous effort to Muslim parents. The Indonesian middle class aims to build the next generation of established families in the future by guiding Islamic values as their life references. These conditions can be interpreted as a form of orientation for parents who have succeeded in combining Islamic



values and modern life in a multicultural sub-group of Indonesian society (Chanifah & Mustapa, 2016).

In preparing their children for the future, parents from middle-class Indonesian Muslim families focus on efforts to fulfill their children's physical and mental needs. The provision of adequate, clean, safe, and comfortable educational facilities and humanist learning strategies in schools are the basis for the emergence of parental confidence in implementing education in schools. In this case, parents' understanding and point of view regarding the form of good educational services become benchmarks in choosing a school as an educational environment for children from middle Indonesian Muslim families. The development of Indonesian middle-class Muslim interest in modern Islamic schools expresses religious identity regarding their social status, class, and privilege (Hasan, 2009).

### Conclusion

The personal values believed in Indonesian middle-class Muslim families are the basis for choosing a school where their children get an education to have a decent life now and in the future. The definition of a decent life in an Indonesian medium-sized Muslim family does not mean regular life in terms of worshipping God but also paying attention to the solid economic side of life that needs to be fought for. There is great hope that parents place on schools to continue the values that apply in their community through the educational process.

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